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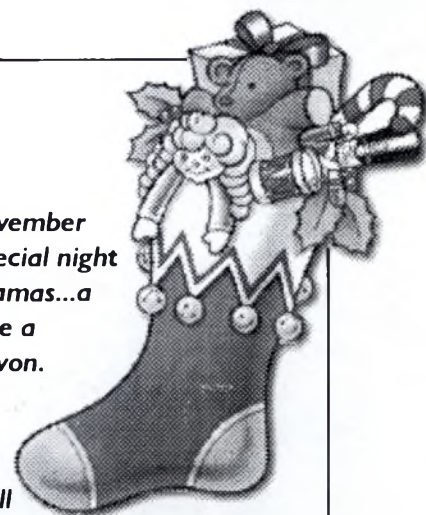
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SPECIAL NIGHT ON NOVEMBER 30TH!

Place Le Chaînon will be open up to midnight on Friday, November 30th! It will be "Midnight Madness", or "Folie minuit" ! a special night where everybody in the boutique will be dressed in their pyjamas...a sight not to be missed! For this special occasion there will be a fashion parade in the mall and many gift certificates to be won.

Hi Kids !

This year Santa lives in Chibougamau! Yes ! He will arrive on Saturday, December 1st with gifts for every child! He will be here visiting each Saturday in December. Santa's kingdom will be located next to the Métro grocers located in the Place Le Chaînon on December 8th, 15th and 22nd, from 1PM until 4PM.



SPECIAL HOLIDAY HOURS

December 12-13-14	9:30am to 9:00pm	December 25	Closed	Merry Christmas !
December 15	9:30am to 5:00pm	December 26		1:00pm to 5:30pm
December 16	1:00pm to 5:00pm	December 27-28-29-30		Regular Hours
December 17-18-19-20-21	9:30am to 9:00pm	December 31		9:30am to 5:00pm
December 22-23-24	9:30am to 5:00pm	January 1-2	Closed	Happy New Year!



REPORTATION NOT DEPORTATION.....

It's tough being a reporter at times. Take November 14th when I was kicked out of a Grand Council/CRA council/board meeting. I was told it was a public meeting by one of the secretaries but in sitting in I found I was being ousted because I was media. I told them that I was there as a James Bay Cree beneficiary but was told that I still represented the Nation and had to leave.

I was angry at the way it suddenly became an in-camera meeting. I was told that sensitive subjects were being discussed and had replied that I would respect the confidentiality of what was being said. It did no good. I guess one of the reasons was that Deputy Grand Chief Mukash opposed the AIP (Agreement-in-principle) during the meeting.

Still, in-camera sessions should be used as seldom as possible and not as a convenient way to dismiss the media. As media I feel that it is not only our job to inform the public but also to act as recorders of history and this deal certainly will be a part of Cree history whether or not it is signed. I would point out to the Cree leadership that both the US and Canadian government systems have television channels that show the debates and arguments that are prevalent and necessary for a democratic society to survive.

When talking to a fellow Cree media from CBC North I learnt that a consultation meeting with Cree post-secondary students would be closed to the media. Now this was a public meeting as we understood things to be. This meant any Cree could go but us. Understandably we were upset so we all decided to go en masse as it were and if they wanted to kick us out it would have to be done publicly. We went because of the reasons I gave before. We weren't given the boot but in the introduction it was

said that people might notice cameras and tape recorders around and if they made people uneasy to let the panel know. Added to this were the words "we didn't invite them, they came on their own." I felt a little disappointed as I had never seen the consultation process and once again felt ostracized. I mean no disrespect but it felt like because I had a job in the media I had somehow agreed to give up my rights as a Cree citizen. I do not consider this to be true.

Perhaps our leaders are not used to the functions of media so I will attempt to explain some of them. I personally am against the AIP because it calls for the Rupert's River Diversion and the Rupert's is near and dear to my heart. That is my personal opinion but in the Nation I attempt to allow all voices in Eeyou Istchee to be heard as best as I can. As an independent paper I could make my magazine as slanted as some in the Council/Board meeting thinks that all Cree media is but I believe in the right of the people to make a well informed decision. It's only fair.

I have been told the reason why we don't have as many letters supporting the AIP is that people are afraid to sign their name to such a letter. It is the policy of the Nation that we allow anonymous letters as long as we know where it comes from (legal purposes). The reason why we do this is because the Cree nation is small and yes, there can be repercussions. We do this so a voice that should be heard is not silenced.

As for the AIP I will also abide by any decision as long as the Cree people have the chance to make it in a democratic fashion as I feel it is their right to do so. I will also vote if I am given that chance but in the meantime I will do my job as a reporter and editor-in-chief.

Will Nicholls

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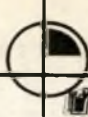
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ON THE COVER

Deputy Grand Chief
Matthew Mukash
Photographer: Neil Diamond
Cover Design: Richard Lawson



...As I was saying, It's better to be paranoid than sorry.

September 11 had everyone asking, where were you when...? For the Cree(p)s, another event deserved the question: Where were you when the Chiefs signed the Agreement in principle?

I was puttering around my apartment when the phone started vibrating like crazy. "Did you hear!?", the voice asked. "It's on TV right now, live." I fear cable and satellite TV so I was forced to listen to the signing ceremony over the phone.

The line had been drawn. Are you for it or are you against it?

From the shadows I've been trying to piece together what happened in the weeks before the signing of the AIP.

First I heard only three people knew about it. Eastmain's Dr. Ted Moses, OJ's Abel Bosum, Rookie Cree negotiator and lawyer for the Cree, Robert Mainville (isn't he a Doctor yet?). My sources forgot to mention Premier Bernard Landry and two or three of his elves.

Landry found notoriety the night of the last referendum for berating an employee at a hotel in Montreal, accusing the poor Latin American Canadian and other "ethnics" and rich Anglos of killing a Quebecois victory. Several years later, he was awarded the premiership.

By the time you read this, our chiefs will have finished their sales/consultation tour on the controversial AIP. If you missed Chiefs Tour 2001 you were either hiding out in a cave or in the bush because everyone who could be there was there.

The extravaganza was brought to us by the Quebec Government. The same people who brought us the very popular JBNQA. 1975 was a long time ago and it took them this long to bring us the new and improved Agreement. Or, JBNQA Too.

Scratch that. They did have another offering not that long ago in Waskaganish, where their show bombed. Their star was humiliated when he was practically forced to paddle a canoe clear across a gymnasium floor while a parade of canoeists held their paddles aloft, ready to wield them as punishment. Thierry Vandal was laughed out of town that night. The reviews the next day cried out, "Cree leaders are forbidden to stage any more shows starring anyone from HQ entertainment." Or something like that.

The tour started in Waskaganish. Why the Skag? I asked myself the same question. It's not the most glamorous of the nine communities. It barely has a night life. Of course, Waskaganish will be most affected by this. And wasn't Waskaganish supposed to the first James Bay Project? Three major rivers still flow by Waskaganish, the Rupert, Broadback and the

Nottaway. You can still, if you chose, get to almost anywhere in the world from Waskaganish by canoe. And imagine the incredible amount of power you can generate from three rivers. You probably wouldn't have to build any more dams for a long while if you had them there. But let's not give them any more ideas.

The second stop was Mistissini. The gymnasium was packed at ten a.m. Will says the notice must have said 8 a.m. A rough count said 200 Crees. The Chiefs brought out their bells and whistles in the form of a Powerpoint rundown of the AIP. Most people voiced what they felt when they first heard the news - shock, anger and betrayal. Some felt extreme gratitude and thanked God for Ted.

Mistissini had interesting questions and more people who spoke against the deal. Waswanipi fawned with an overwhelming yes. Nemaska lashed back with an angry and hurt No! Chisasibi was quietly split. Whapmagoostui was given a perfunctory audience.

And so it went through the five communities I visited with Doctor Ted's Travelling Show. I heard from the chiefs themselves that reaction in OJ, Eastmain and Wemindji was "good."

People's two main concerns were the money and the river. Many asked why it was done in secrecy or why it was done at all. Reasons given were: "The lower ministers would have killed it. The press would have had an orgy." We haven't yet but if the government is willing to cover costs...

Some comments: "We should ask for some category 3 land back." "I have a bad feeling about this." "We should ask for a down payment of 1.5 billion dollars as insurance." "You (the Chiefs) remind me of Hydro Quebec!" Some wit pulled me aside with a note that said, "Trick or Treat?"

The dreaded O word was brought up more times than there are letters in Osama. The Grand chief stated that the events of Black Tuesday brought a change in Cree Quebec relations. "We have to stop fighting..." said Ted. Hey, that rhymes, "said Ted." He was talking about our 20-something court cases against Quebec, Ottawa, and whoever else we don't like. That's the deal, we drop every single court case in exchange for 3.5 or 3.8 billion. The court cases could win the greedy Cree that same amount. But the lawyers don't seem so confident in winning. It's the easy way out. Some wise ass asked during a smoke break, "Since when did fighting in the courts become Osamist?"

The chiefs believe in this Agreement. They had a full three days to ponder its mysteries from when they were first informed 'til when they all agreed. That's a lot of thinking on something that will affect every single Cree for 50 years and beyond. I barely think of what I'm going to be doing with my day when I first get dragged kicking and screaming from my bed in the morning.

It's been said that this is the most divided, rubber-armed, and spineless collection of chiefs ever voted in by the Cree people. I didn't say that. It's just my job to inform you. We better think as fast as they did because we only have a month before it comes down to the wire friends.

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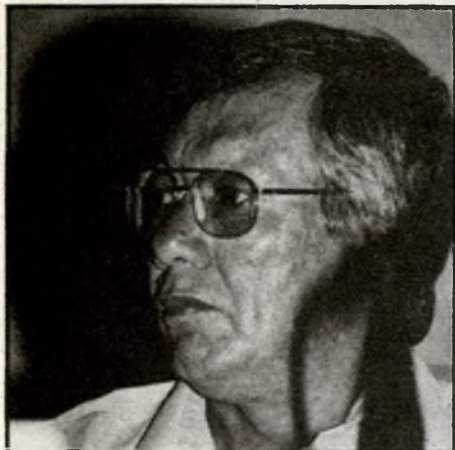
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HOW TO DECIDE THE FUTURE OF THE AIP AND THE CREE

With the consultation process on the Agreement-in-principle in full swing, questions persist. Reaction has been swift, but it has been difficult to gauge just how the deal has been received in the communities. *The Nation* has begun canvassing Cree leaders on the progress of the Agreement-in-principle consultations. What will determine Cree consent? How have the communities reacted so far? Where do the leaders stand on the issue? What is a realistic deadline? Part II will appear in the next issue.



Chief Reggie Mark, Wemindji
What form will consent take?

We haven't gotten that far yet. I have no indication how the vote is going to be taken.

What has been your community's reaction?

It's mainly positive. There are people that want some time to think about it before they come to a decision. (In a public meeting with the people of Wemindji, before the official consultations, Chief Mark met with the different groups, elders and youth, to pass on information. A translated breakdown of the Agreement in Principle in syllabics was made available.)

What is your position on the AIP?

I supported the Agreement-in-principle right from the start and I will continue to support it.

Is there a set deadline?

I believe it's around the 20th of December.

Chief Violet Pachanos, Chisasibi

What form will consent take?

I don't think its been decided yet. There are various forms it can take:

referendum, vote, etc.



What has been your community's reaction?

Like most communities there are people who don't agree, some who agree, and some who are undecided. People are looking for more details. From the meetings that we've had, people seem to support the agreement.

What is your position on the AIP?

Right now this is an Agreement-in-principle, it is something to work with. For me, a lot of the things in the Agreement-in-principle are things we've been after for Chisasibi, especially as concerns relations with Hydro-Quebec and a desire to create more employment opportunities.



Chief David Masty, Whapmagoostui

What form will consent take?

I've discussed that with my council. As far as Whapmagoostui is concerned, I would like my community to decide through a referendum. We're looking at options, but there's been no formal decision yet. We are discussing at the local level. I want all community members to be involved. We're thinking of a majority of 50% plus one as a minimum requirement, but it still needs to be discussed.

What has been your community's reaction?

We just completed the consultation and had one meeting to explain the agreement. Now we need to do local consultations. It's hard to say what the reaction is right now.

Brian Zelnicker

cont on page 9

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TOXIC CRISIS IN OUJE-BOUGOUMOU

It is by sheer chance that an American researcher became involved in the contamination crisis currently affecting the community of Ouje-Bougoumou. Chris Covell was a graduate student in environmental sciences when he headed across the border and north to Ouje-Bougoumou for an eco-tour experience in March, 2000. Chris was a guest of David and Anna Bosum who conduct tours into the bush. While crossing a frozen lake together on a dog sled, one on each runner, David asked Chris, "can mines make fish sick?"

David Bosum took his visitor to the Campbell Point mine site. Covell, who had come to Cree territory as part of a cultural exchange to see how tallymen like David Bosum live in the bush, never bargained on what he would discover next. His trained eye immediately spotted a kill-zone kilometers wide. A kill-zone is an area so contaminated that nothing can grow, not even lichens or weeds. "Kill-zones are like red flags to the trained eye," said Covell, who added that they should be non-existent if companies are complying with current industry standards.

"There were mine tailings everywhere," Covell recalled as he described the effect on the area as that of a lunar landscape. Recognizing the situation as one of serious toxic contamination, Covell took a sample home with him to have it analyzed at his own expense. The results showed a level of toxicity so high that the lab technician provided his service free of charge, realizing the huge case that Covell had on his hands.

Joseph Shecapio-Blacksmith, environmental officer for Ouje-Bougoumou, is frustrated over the provincial government's failure to communicate their findings earlier on. According to him, there have been illnesses, tumors and deformed fish found, but eyewitness reports from the Cree aren't enough to satisfy a burden of proof based on scientific study.

Kenny Mianscum, Ouje-Bougoumou's Deputy Chief, lost his father Albert to cancer last September. He also expressed frustration over the lack of information getting to the community. The Mianscum family was only informed that Albert had cancer two weeks before he died. Kenny wonders if his father died as a result of contamination and if his children will be able to live off the land. "It hurts," said Mianscum, "they're making an effort to live off land that has already been damaged."

While alarm bells were ringing for tallymen like Albert Mianscum, who caught fish with visible deformities, the government continued to drag its heels on the issue. Recent reports show that the Ministry of the environment knew about the contamination two years before going public, but there are fears that mining activity in the area ran unchecked for much longer. Aerial surveillance photos, obtained from government archives, give evidence of mine tailings and landfills leeching into the lakes.

An estimated cost for an environmental clean up of the affected area, based on evidence gleaned so far, will run somewhere between \$500 million and \$1 billion dollars. The estimate is partly based on a similar case at Silver City, Idaho, where the Environmental Protection Agency has estimated a clean up costing \$359 million - \$1 billion and taking some 20-30 years to complete. Three mine sites have been looked at so far and there are at least another 30 known mines in the area, so estimates could run much higher after further investigation.

Concern now centers over what action will be

taken and who will take responsibility. "I want to see the government take responsibility," said Kenny Mianscum, "that includes funding the studies and an environmental clean up." The Quebec government has expressed a willingness to cooperate with Ouje-Bougoumou, but no plan has been put into action yet. A meeting is being planned between the ministry of the environment and the community, but there are still no details about a specific date, time, and place.

Meanwhile, a seminar/workshop was held at Dartmouth College on November 1st. Invited to the meeting were 20 experts in the field as well as Cree officials and two representatives from the Quebec Ministry of the environment. The gravity of the crisis was evident from the presence of Masry & Vititoe, the celebrated Southern California law firm involved in the Erin Brockovich case.

At another environmental conference held in Montreal on November 8th, Native representatives had to listen as Paul Charest, an anthropology professor from Laval University, talked about the need for First Nations to adopt capitalism and mentioned how hard a task it is to bring the "fourth world into the first." Kenny Mianscum, who attended the conference, said, "what really surprised me is that people clapped after his presentation." Mianscum, Shecapio-Blacksmith and Covell were all visibly disturbed by the overtly racist comments they heard. They expressed concern over whether the toxic crisis in Ouje-Bougoumou would be treated with more care if it were a non-Native community.

"The government talks of development, but when I visit Cree territory I don't see development, I see destruction," said Covell. The New Hampshire-based researcher feels that the government should bear responsibility for further studies and a clean up, but also stressed the need for a third party watchdog to make sure the job gets done right. Since detection limits in studies can vary, a split sample run by an independent researcher would ensure an accurate evaluation of the samples.

Getting a rapid response from the Quebec government is vital, according to experts, but there is also concern over the need for the Cree leadership to press the issue. There is speculation that the toxic disaster in Ouje-Bougoumou has been put on the backburner so as not to interfere with the Agreement-in-principle. The fear now is that the people of Ouje-Bougoumou will become neglected pawns in the chess game of politics.

by Brian Zelnicker

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What is your position on the AIP?

I agreed to have this agreement brought to my people for their approval. I will respect the wishes of my community. It



(the AIP) addresses some economic needs for our community, but I know there is a price to be paid. I'd like the people to reflect on it.

What is your reaction to Matthew Mukash's opposition?

I will focus on the merits of the Agreement. The situation between Matthew Mukash and the Grand Chief is regrettable. The issue for me is whether my people accept (the AIP) or not.

Chief Paul Gull, Waswanipi

What form will consent take?

I think it should be a vote in each of the communities. The problem with a referendum is that the bigger communities will outnumber the smaller ones. It has to be unanimous among all the communities. If one community doesn't want it then it shouldn't go through. I think the percentage should be higher than 50 plus one. Under the Cree-Naskapi Act you need a certain amount (65% support to cede land) for consensus.



What has been your community's reaction?

There are still a lot of 'what-ifs'. There are still people with a lot of questions. I think they need to better understand the information that's been put before them. There are a number of people who did not come to the meeting who need to understand.

What is your position on the AIP?

I had a hard time coming up with an answer. I believe that for future generations we could take it (the AIP) if we work on it. We need to develop it to make it work. If you are totally against it, I would say to those people, it's very easy to criticize but what would you do instead? In the end it's the decision of the people.

John Paul Murdoch, legal advisor/CRA Rep. for Waskaganish

What form will consent take?

There are many possibilities. We had a meeting discussing all the options:

Band Council Resolutions; Referendum for everyone; Referendum by community, Special General Assembly. Consent will be determined by the will of the people, not the will of the leaders.

What has community reaction been like?

In some communities they asked us, where can we sign right now? Others want more information. In Waskaganish there was initial shock over the announcement. Some were for it, some were against it, and many wanted more information. It's been the same in all the communities. In general we're heading in the support direction. We have a lot of work ahead of us.

What is your position on the AIP?



It will put the resources in our hands to finally do what we're capable of. This (AIP) can help produce a Cree economy, a Cree market. The idea of self-government will be put to work, we won't just be talking about it.

Is there a set deadline?

I think there's a real possibility to get a text together by the end of December.

Do You Have An Opinion?

The Nation wants to know what you think of the Agreement in Principle. This is one of the most important decisions of our generation and your voice deserves to be heard.

Call *the Nation* at 514-272-3077

Ask for Will or Brian Z.

email: nation@beesum.ca

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Looking for Stringers!!!!!!!!!!

What is a stringer you ask? A stringer is a freelance writer. Here at the Nation we are looking for people to cover local events in the communities when we can't make it there. If you are interested:

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Mukash Breaks Ranks

-WILLIAM NICHOLLS-

You've come out as being opposed to the Agreement-in-Principle that was signed between the Cree leadership and Quebec Premier Landry on October 23, 2001. Why?

Yes, and in doing so I believe I have broken the oath of impartiality. I am taking many risks. But first I want to state that whatever comes out of this interview is done with due respect and without prejudice to anyone, leader, or government. I anticipate that I may very strongly be challenged for the statements I will make in this interview. I want to make that clear.

Why did you decide to announce your opposition at this time? Why not at the time when the AIP was presented to the Chiefs in Montreal the week before the announcement?

There were certain questions that I asked myself. I honestly did not know whom to turn to for answers. So I decided to wait.

What were the questions you were asking yourself?

There were many. One of them was whether or not the AIP would be binding once it's signed in that the Cree Nation would not have a choice but to vote on a final agreement within a limited time-frame. The other one was whether or not we would be overstepping the authority of the General Assembly which, legally, is the authority to which all our institutions, including the GCCEI/CRA Council/Board - report to.

When you made that announcement to the GCCEI/CRA Council/Board, the reaction from the Grand Chief/Chair was immediate and you were told that you could oppose all you want but not to expect to use or access the resources of the GCCEI/CRA, and that you stood alone. What happened?

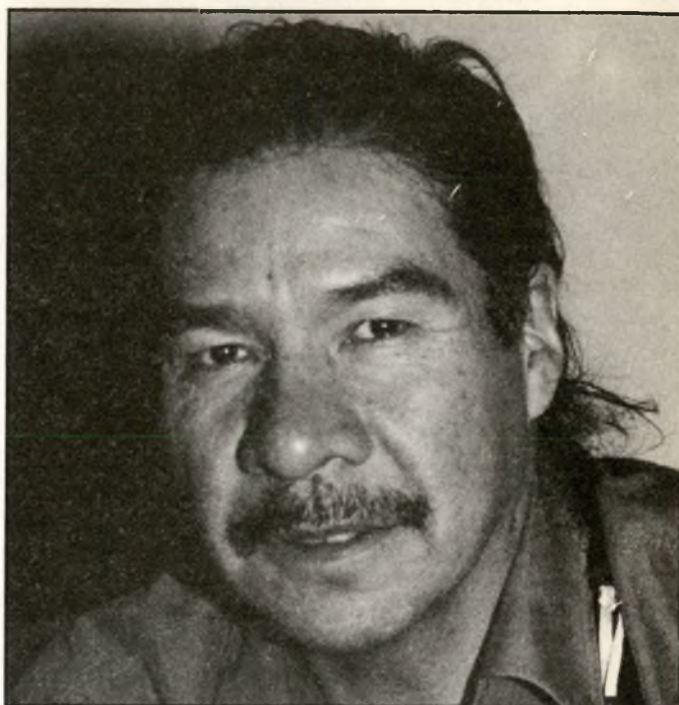
The point I wanted to make at that meeting was that, remembering the oath of impartiality, I felt that the process to promote the AIP was biased in that we were asking everyone to play along. I told the meeting that it was obvious that those who oppose felt they were put down or brushed aside. The reaction from the meeting confirmed my point. I am really sorry that this happened. As any human being would have done, I left the meeting. I was much later informed that the matter of our Nation's resources had been clarified at that meeting.

The Nation also learned that at that meeting you were accused of staging the protest that apparently took place during the consultation meeting in Nemaska. Would you like to comment on this one?

What I can say about this - is this: "I am innocent until proven guilty." (laugh) I would rather not dwell on these kinds of questions. I want to make that clear. There are other more important issues at hand here.

Could you tell us the reasons you oppose this Agreement?

Indeed. I am not only concerned about this proposed new agreement but I am concerned about the overall question of our future as a people and our homeland.



What we are dealing with, today, is what our ancestors have been dealing with since Day One of the contact with foreigners - the spirit of "colonization" and the effect of "oppression" that comes with it. There is a plan by governments to eventually take full control and occupy Eeyou Istchee. This is a fact. Unfortunately, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) spills out the road map for this eventual takeover. We have to take a very serious look at this matter as a nation.

I feel that we are binding ourselves to a process that aims to restrict our freedom to exercise our sovereign authority as peoples over Eeyou Istchee.

How is the JBNQA a road map for governments to eventually take full control over Eeyouch and Eeyou Istchee?

When I first learned of the agreement, I thought that it could be a good agreement if our people were willing to let go of the volume of resources they were required to sacrifice. But when I found out that it was going to be another complimentary agreement to the JBNQA, I lost interest. The concept of "extinguishment" began to plague me, again.

Why?

You see, what our advisors don't tell us is this: for the governments, "extinguishment" is very real. It's a way to establish, over time, full control, authority and jurisdiction over aboriginal lands. The way it works is that it does not serve its purpose until full implementation takes place of the treaty or agreement in which it exists. It's an illusory concept that does not really exist in our sense of reality or at the level of Eeyou wisdom. Once the full implementation process is complete, full colonization has taken place. After that, there is likely an attempt by governments to introduce legislation that eliminates the concept

of Aboriginal lands, rights, title and identity. This is what Pierre Trudeau attempted to do when he introduced the White Paper in 1969. He suggested that every Aboriginal person be considered and treated as any other Canadian citizen.

If we do not do anything about what's going on, if we just continue to ride on this wave of illusion of future prosperity or the illusion of generosity of governments, our future generations could end up with the eventual consequences of losing their language, culture and identity. They will be the ones to pay for our mistakes. Why do you think there was residential school? They wanted to disconnect us from the land, make us lose our language, our cultural beliefs, values, and most of all, to damage our spirit. Why do you think there is extinguishment?

What is your biggest concern with respect to this agreement?

I fear that if we do not bother to look to the possible technicalities of the whole matter at hand and we do not bring it back to the General Assembly, we could be setting a dangerous precedent for the future. I know that the people at Whapmagoostui are asking themselves: Will the same thing happen with respect to the Great Whale diversion scheme? What if we say "no" and we get out-voted by other communities? There are many, in my view, too many uncertainties.

What's going to happen from here on?

I think that unless we concentrate on the big picture, that what we are faced with is the on-going process of "colonization" and the effect of "oppression" that comes with it – we are going to destroy ourselves. Oppression is inter-generational and plays a huge role in our reactions to the actions of governments, our leaders, and it's very damaging. The most overpowering effect is fear. Fear is the greatest tool of the colonizer. Its effect is the following: you get a sense of worthlessness, helplessness, depression, paranoia, distrust, sleeplessness, unable to focus at home, in the workplace, harassment, anger, breaking up friendships, relationships, divisions within families, churches, leadership and so on. It is very damaging, and we are its victims. Quebec must be laughing really hard now.

Why?

Well, there is a saying that goes something like this: "The greatest tool of a colonizer is the mind of the colonized."

You know, it's ironic that it's not Hydro-Quebec, the forestry companies or the mining companies we fought so hard and even brought to court that are promoting the construction of dams, forestry or mining. Think about it.

One of my greatest concerns is in the way we always tend to overlook the most important group in our society, those members who still actively practice our culture and the traditional way of life and, particularly, our own Elders. I truly feel for those families who are still out on the land knowing that they might lose part or all of their trap line and even the sites in which their loved ones may be buried. We seem to be applying the concept of "balance of inconvenience" against our own people, a concept that favours the needs of the greater number of people versus the smaller group. Didn't we once

argue that it was those who were actively practicing our culture on the land that made the JBNQA possible? What happened to us?

Do you think that the final agreement will be ratified?

It's really up to the people. A big commitment is required of us by Quebec. Our Nation must be well educated in order to make an informed decision on this proposed new agreement. That's all I can say about that.

How would you have proceeded if you had been the Grand Chief? Would you have taken a different approach?

I can't answer these questions. I believe every leader is different and has his or her way of leading. When I was Chief, I could have told my people at Whapmagoostui that the governments and Hydro-Quebec were too powerful and that we could not stop Great Whale. Some people did believe this. But I had total faith that it could be stopped and sure enough it was shelved. It might be not dead yet, but the river still runs free today as it has for millennia. The power is in having faith. If you have faith, Tseymanitou, God, does the rest for you.

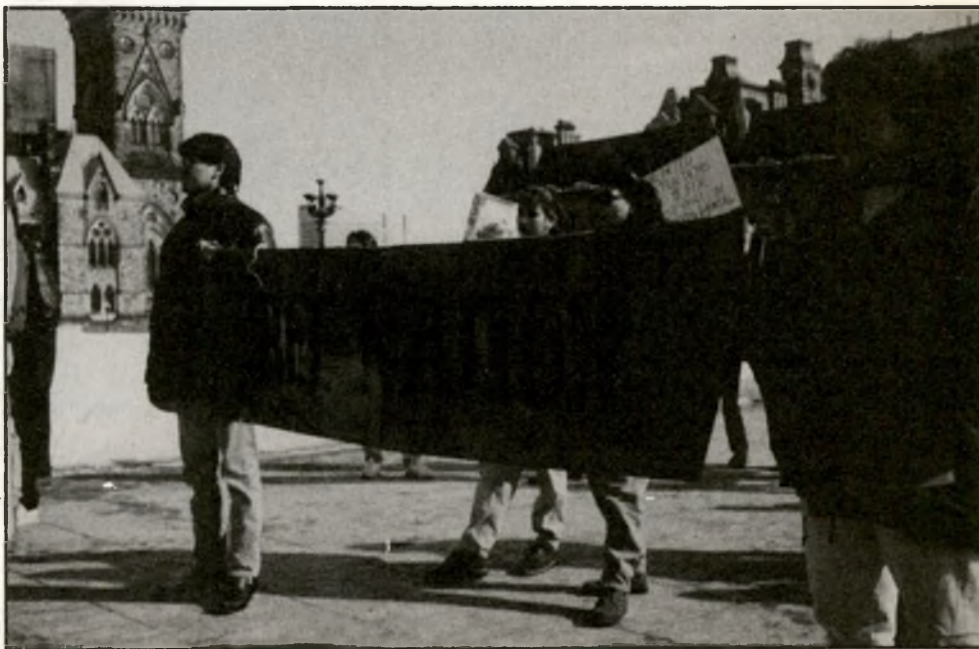
What I do want to say is this, however, regarding the secrecy of the negotiations: if Premier Landry could not trust his own people not to mention the deal to the media, then what kind of a government is he running that they must hide a deal that would bring about economic benefits to the people who elected them? There is something wrong about this.

Do you think that the Quebec Government people were more informed than the Cree chiefs?

You know, it is curious that Mr. Landry received a standing ovation when he announced the AIP to his government. No, this is a deal that most probably was carefully crafted over a long period of time, with the participation of many legal advisors to the government, including the ministry of justice. Of course, this is just speculation.

What about our advisors, do you think that they knew long before it was even brought to the Chiefs?

I would be speculating again if I were to answer that.



What do you think of use of the terms "nation-to-nation" in the AIP? Could this be an attempt by Quebec to have the Cree Nation recognize it as a "nation" for the purpose of self-determination?

Absolutely, and the price is \$3.5 billion and much more! You know, I am not a lawyer, but I do know that in 1983, the Quebec National Assembly passed a resolution in the Quebec Parliament, recognizing Aboriginal Nations in Quebec as "nations". But they narrowed down the concept of 'aboriginal nation' to the equivalence of a municipal authority. They said something to the effect that Aboriginal nations could exercise self-government within the framework of Quebec legislation, and only within lands allocated to them. The resolution further stated that Aboriginal nations could not be recognized as sovereign nations because Quebec has to protect its territorial integrity. What does that tell us Eeyouch? We can only exercise self-government within Category I lands. And if Quebec goes, we go! Let's not forget also, any agreement that we sign with Quebec gives legitimacy to the fate of other Aboriginal nations in the province. On our part, I do not recall a General Assembly Resolution recognizing Quebec as a "nation." I think we have to be very careful.

What is the alternative?

First of all, I believe that for the record there are some clarifications to be made with respect to AIP. For instance, did we do the right thing not bringing back the Agreement to the General Assembly? I did suggest that we do this at the last Council/Board meeting, which took place in Montreal. I am also hearing the phrase "conflict of interest." Because of the magnitude and complexity of the issues involved, it seems imperative to get direction from the highest authority of our Nation, the General Assembly. Otherwise, the issue of trust could go out of proportions.

The Alternative? The alternative is not more money. That will come in time. There will be another deal. We have to realize that we, the Eeyouch, are sitting on trillions and trillions worth of natural resources in the last untouched wilderness of North America, and the whole world will be after them in the future. We are sitting on a gold mine. This is why governments do not want to recognize us as a sovereign nation for the time being. They are certainly buying time. They are very gradually moving into our homeland and in a very subtle way. It's very hard to notice. It begins with "partnerships," "new relationship," "nation-to-nation relationship," "new agreements with billions promised over 50 years," partnership in tourism," "new development corporation," and on and on. We have been stripped of our freedom to express ourselves as a people, our

freedom to exercise sovereign authority. As long as our only goal is to implement the JBNQA, which to me is detrimental and restrictive of our development and our evolution over time as peoples, we will continue box ourselves in or remain in this political straight jacket that we are tied in. We are the only ones who can free us, but we must have a very strong will!

We have to wake up!

Nobody else is going to place us as equals with other nations in the world but us. Only we can do that, with much determination and faith in Tsey-manitou. We have to formally affirm and declare our sovereignty, our sovereign power, authority and jurisdiction over Eeyou Istchee. Our sovereign power has always been there. It always stayed with us. We did not see it because of the blinding and detrimental effect of "oppression," a product of what I call the beast, "colonization." We must put this in the hands of Tsey-manitou. We must affirm our sovereignty in a Declaration. We are preparing this right now. It will be presented to Eeyouch soon. Let's wait before we sign any more agreements with any governments until we have formally proclaimed Declaration on our sovereignty under the Sacred Law, Eeyou Customary Law and Eeyou Philosophy. We can then negotiate a new Treaty that establishes all the kinds of relationships, partnerships that we want with other peoples and

their governments. The golden opportunity is now! That is my position.

Is there something you will like to say to the people who elected you?

I believe that Tsey-manitou, Our Creator, Our Provider, Our Protector, Our Very Essence has put this Agreement before us for a reason. It is a wake up call, a call to protect the Earth and much more. We are the last peoples to understand humanity's connection to the Earth in a sacred way. We have a sacred duty and responsibility to humanity. Our Elders tell us that in order to

truly know Tsey-manitou, God, one must know one's sacred connection to the Earth. If you want to take something from the Earth Mother, they say, you must ask the One who created her. And once given, then you give gratitude. That is the Eeyou Way! For 500 years these teachings have received but a deaf ear and a blind eye from the colonizers. But look carefully at what is happening in the world today. Our nation must be the "Agent of Change" in humanity's journey of self-discovery.

Listen.... the fishes, the little ones on the land, the animals, the birds, the rocks, the little creeks, the lakes, the rivers, the falls, the trees that remind us of the One Above - all manifestations of the Spirit of Tsey-manitou...listen...they are calling for help!



Rupert's River Reverence

-William Nicholls-

One day I had a call from Eric Gagnon, who told me he was a president and founder of the Rupert's River Revenence Coalition. Gagnon comes from Montreal and went north to work for the Cree School Board. He liked the region so well he decided to stay on in Chibougamau when his contract ran out. Gagnon says he loves the Rupert's and wants to save it's untouched beauty.

The Nation : When did your organization start?

Eric Gagnon : It began in the summer of 1997 when friends of mine helped me to discover this magnificent river. It was love at first sight. I knew from that day the Rupert and I would be bound for life. My friends and I began to look closer at Hydro-Quebec's intentions towards this river.

The announcement of the agreement in principal (AIP) with the Quebec Cree totally startled us. We were shocked, deeply disappointed and felt betrayed. I was so sure our Cree brothers would have held out longer ! With a sense of urgency we proceeded to set up this coalition. I am delighted to see how widespread and strong the national network of organisations is, associations and individuals who are committed to this river's protection. We are currently looking for and getting lots of support from all across America from ecological groups, the ecotourism and leisure industry, the scientific community, the media, political parties, native organizations, etc.

You operate out of Chibougamau. What is your connection with the Rupert's River?

During our short summers, I operate a small adventure tourism company featuring whitewater kayaking as a means to explore the region and transform oneself. The magic of the James Bay rivers does the rest. The Rupert River flows less than three hours from Chibougamau, that is almost in my backyard ! It is so close that half of the Cree communities are located farther from the Rupert than we are in Chibougamau. We also like to paddle the Broadback, Eastmain, and La Grande rivers.

Can Natives join your organisation ?

This is one of the best things that could happen to it ! And it is something we are openly looking for. In fact, flocks of Cree ancestors are, in spirit, registering by the day and are becoming, in their subtle way, important members of our organization. Their presence at my side, which I take time to invoke and acknowledge every day, gives me lots of energy, strength and peace of heart. They obviously, too, think that money is not an issue and cannot be eaten.

We are also very proud to feel that our work is already benefitting the little Crees to be born in the next centuries. In the last analysis, amusingly, our organisation is probably Creeer than the Crees... Just joking ! Living Crees are thus most welcome to join ; they sure will feel at home ! Some of them already did contact us, by the way.

Reverence Rupert has been identified at first as « an emergent, non-native organization » for the following reasons :

1) to clearly identify it as a third player, apart from the Government of Quebec and the GCC, in a deal that seemed to have forgotten the existence of other interests ;

2) for the population of Southern Quebec and the Government of Quebec to know that this was not « only Cree interference, as usual » and that Hydro-Quebec development policy in James Bay is not approved by all non-natives either ;

3) for the Cree leaders to know that non-natives can also stand up to defend the land.

The protection of the Rupert River is an issue for all humankind, as is the safekeeping of all natural marvels to be found on this planet. But those who intimately know the Rupert are privileged and sought-for members of such a coalition. The broader the representation of a coalition, the bigger its impact. Truly, by nature, Rupert River Reverence is above ethnic considerations. From our point of view, the real *Iyiyuschi* is in the heart.

How do you see present relations with the Crees and non-Natives in the area? How would you see them in the future?

Things could be a lot better in the non-native towns of Northern Quebec, in my opinion. Public organizations of both our populations are developing too independently, without much official cooperation. Funding programs mutually exclude each other's clientele, based on ethnic identification. This hampers profitable co-development projects. Some exceptions are encouraging, but they are to be found in the private sector. The Fonds de solidarité Nord-du-Québec, for example, sets a promising standard with its Board balanced with Jamesians, Cree and Inuit representatives.

I used to be an active member of a non-profit organization called Intercultural Friendship Committee, which was devoted to generating activities of all kinds between Jamesians from Chibougamau-Chapais and the surrounding Cree communities. After a few good years of great activities, each passing year saw less and less people participating, from both ethnic groups, as some political and industrial conflicts poisoned the collective mind. We finally had to put the organization to sleep, waiting for better days, much to our disappointment. .

But I think we have reached the bottom of this low ebb. I know for sure that, should both cultures join forces and be fully supported by their political leaders and public organisations in the side-by-side development of James Bay, we will witness tremendous changes, sooner than you think. Like many Jamesians, I experienced uplifting hours working, celebrating, spending leisure time, and talking with Crees – my vision of the future is to, by all means available, multiply and spread such opportunities across the whole territory. And to always turn down any manifestations of segregation I come to witness, on either side, from the top to the bottom of the scale of society.

What are some of your plans to save the Rupert's River?

The first action, and by far the most important, is to support the Crees in making the Agreement more acceptable. In my opinion, the proposed deal is inhumane. The Crees should never

sign a deal that requires them to squash fundamental values, history and, in the last analysis, their collective self-esteem and sense of pride. Such excruciating sacrifices shall never be part of any deal – in fact, such blackmail is a form of violence, and it must be contrary to the Charter of Freedom and Rights. This deal will be a good deal. The day it will prove WIN-WIN, without implying undue sacrifices from either side will be one we both recognize. The Government of Quebec is already not sacrificing anything, really, so why should the Crees ?

The Crees constitute the best defense against the destruction of the Rupert. Hydro-Quebec considers their support as a must. If the Crees were to authorize the diversion of the Rupert, we are engaging ourselves to a long, costly and painful process. We would then have to look at current means of saving this river : political lobbying, pressure from environmentalist groups, petitions, manifestations, and participating in environmental hearings. The Crees can, in one single move, do much more than this. This is why we felt so strongly in our determination to join them before anyone else, aiming at respectfully but seriously « whip up their pride and wake them to their senses », as only brothers can do sometimes, over a family issue.

Do you think you have rights to the Rupert's River?

Of course not – we have no rights whatsoever with regards to this river, only duties. The first duty is reverence, the second is preservation and the third is promotion and sharing.

What about the employment opportunities for the area if the project goes through?

This one is easy to answer. First, Cree and Jamesians will quarrel over low key jobs. For a few years, they will cut wood, drive trucks and be involved in some construction work. Afterwards, as Hydro-Quebec has proven in the past in hydro-electric development projects in resource regions, we will watch specialized workers, living in southern cities, coming to the region to work on the high tech jobs, in and out every week or so. The low key jobs will have lasted 3-4 years, at most, and the devastation of the territory will last forever. Furthermore, if Hydro-Quebec and the Government of Quebec play their cards well, the Cree communities will find themselves more divided than ever and also more isolated than ever from the rest of the province. You can imagine what will happen next.

Promises of direct and indirect economic benefits related to hydro development are just a vast mirage (illusion). On the opposite, the history, the ecosystems, the ecotourism potential and the beauty of the Rupert are a reality. I do not know of any place in the world where hydroelectric development contributed to a sound, sustainable development of communities and their environment. A quick tour of the small, artificially maintained locality of Radisson will tell you all you need to know about supposed economic benefits.

The only things that run smoothly, once a dam or a reservoir are built, are the turbines...

What are your alternatives for building up the area?

As a project development consultant, I had the privilege to help a few Cree promoters to prepare business plans and feasibility studies leading to very original and promising projects. The ones I like most combine the best of what both nations can offer. As you understand, I am bound to professional confidentiality, but some of these projects are of public knowledge. Take for instance the whole new concept of James Bay Road and the specific multi-service facilities projects at KM 372 (Eastmain) and KM 257 (Waskaganish), to name only those.

And I have heard great ideas in Mistissini, Waswanipi and Oujé-Bougoumou.

There is also the development of ecotourism. Should the international tourism market know more about what is offered here, we would soon run out of guides, of hotels and time to host the tourists.

Consider also the potential for homeopathic remedies that the Crees know about. This is a vast untapped market. There are the Wellness journeys that we have heard about. I know many Quebecers who would pay to go on them and the European market would be huge if we all worked together to develop it for the good of the region. These are all good examples of joint, sustainable, sound avenues of development, adapted to local cultures and regional environment.

The threat that is facing the Rupert river is providing an unprecedented opportunity to join efforts in sound and sustainable avenues of development we could be so proud of.

Is there anything else you wish to say?

So many more things could be considered. The lucrative energy market, of which very few people knows who is pulling the strings, in whose or what interests...

The recent scientific discoveries about disastrous impacts caused by dams and reservoirs, thought of in the last century as a clean energy production source... Let us keep the highest perspective for the moment and avoid these not-so-cool details.

There are two orders of river protection pitches: the lower order and the higher order. **Lower defense pitch** is interesting and you probably know it already, for it is being used every time there is a river, a mountain, a valley, a lake, a community or a sea to save from disaster. It involves the necessary battles about numbers, economical considerations, environmental impact evaluations, cultural and anthropological aspects to take into consideration, technical and scientific givens, political questions, direct and indirect benefits to question. And, of course, we will have to fight on all these battlefronts, our weapons being studies, statistics, demonstrations, documentation, expert advices, projections, protests, petitions. You can easily imagine the amount of work needed here – with no guarantee of success.

The **higher river defense pitch** is much subtler, but definitely more potent. It involves the kind of speech that Natives usually understand more easily than anyone else. It calls for noble, fundamental values. Reverence for Nature and its plentiful graces. The intent of a Spirit behind all things. Preservation of collective memory, the ancestors' memory, who wrote history on the banks of a river in which every meander, every rapid is witnessed and recorded as a piece of collective memory. The Rupert River, like every big virgin river (and very few are left) is a universe untopped itself, with a fragile balance. In no way should we destroy that which we cannot create or reproduce. This whole defense pitch has nothing to do with studies, figures and experts. It must appeal to the most noble part of our being, to those invisible and unmeasurable things which are probably more real than things to be found in the visible realm.

But the best pitch is still the one that is not necessary. The Cree Nation has the possibility to avoid all of this painful struggle. The Crees can, without much effort, prevent the devastation of the land, the negation of their past and their roots, by killing the project in the egg.

I truly wish the Rupert River Reverence to dissolve, as the threat disappears. Should the Cree majority fail us, we will be ready – our decision is already made. But to tell you the truth, I would rather invest my time and energies into sound and sustainable co-development...

Deputy Chief of Nemaska First Nation Throws Support behind Mukash and Iseroff

-Will Nicholls-

Shortly after Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash made his public announcement concerning the AIP, Deputy Chief Josie Jimikin of Nemaska attacked the agreement.

According to some residents, who wish to remain anonymous, resistance to the AIP is starting to be organized. Jimikin told the Nation that he had "plenty of volunteers" who helped him to post his position around the community.

The Grand Council/CRA have claimed that a majority of Nemaska supports the AIP. People opposing the AIP have claimed a majority of Nemaska residents oppose the AIP.

The following is Jimikin's statement that was posted around the Nemaska community.

Statement to the Council of the Nemaska First Nation and to the Members of Nemaska First Nation

You may not like what you are going to hear; the tone or what I am going to say and where I stand on the matter of the A.I.P. I will not make it short and sweet; I will make it short and bitter.

Let me begin by using the overused politically correct expression "*with all due respect*" and the age-old legalistic expression "*without prejudice*," for I will be very direct and frank in exercising my right to freedom of expression, to freedom of speech.

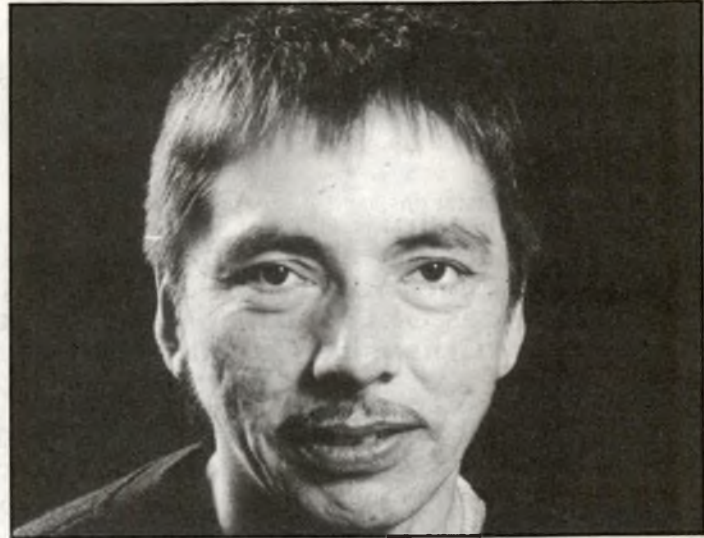
Agreement in Principle (AIP)

Nothing that I have heard, read or seen has convinced me that this deal is the best deal or the right deal for an evolving and developing Cree Nation. Nothing! Nothing that I have heard and read from the Grand Chief's public verbal and written statements and responses to questions from members of Cree Nation; nothing convinces me that this is the direction that the Cree Nation should be moving towards at this point in history.

The Grand Chief started promoting this A.I.P. by advising the Chief's and the members of the Cree Nation "*to think with their heads and not with their hearts*" and only recently made a passing remark regarding heartfelt concerns. The Grand Chief, guided and assisted by his legally and technically advised logic and reasoning and his narrow-minded myopic views of Cree Nation Economic Development, has started tearing out the sacred contents of the hearts of the members of the Cree Nation and is throwing them into the cold and desecrated waters of Eeyou Astchee.

Every response and statement; verbal and written from the Cree leadership especially those from the Grand Chief himself has only served to reinforce, and reaffirm my conviction, my belief from not only from my head, but from my heart also; that our present political leadership possesses and promotes a heartless and distorted vision of the future of the Cree Nation and of Eeyou Astchee and that of Cree Nation Economic Development in general.

I have personally witnessed first hand, this lack of real vision



and sense of direction, which was so obviously revealed at a Joint meeting of the GCCEI/CRA Council/Board and the CRA Board of Compensation held in December 2000. Calculating on a 50-year time frame, at this meeting the GCCEI/CRA Council/Board, under its present leadership permitted and promoted the direct and outright leakage of approximately 1.5 Billion dollars from just one of the existing sectors of the Cree Nation community economies and the regional economy of Eeyou Astchee.

If the Grand Chief and his associates and advisors feel like they are personally being attacked and insulted, if they feel that they are not being respected, then I empathize with them for they have brought this upon themselves because of their recent actions and the approach that they and not the people have chosen to follow. And because of the direction they are dragging the Cree Nation & Eeyou Astchee towards at this time.

This community will know, if they don't already, that the Council of the Nemaska First Nation does not and will not stand unanimously united in support of the A.I.P.

I will openly and publicly express my opposition to this A.I.P. I will openly and publicly express my lack of belief and confidence in the actions and approach presently being pursued by GCCEI/CRA leadership. And no one is going to stop me!

No one is going to infringe upon my human right to freedom of expression. No one is going to suspend my human right to freedom of speech! Not like the Grand Chief is doing to the employees and staff of GCCEI/CRA in his letter dated October 29th 2001.

I now formally declare my full endorsement and support to the CNYC Youth Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff and the Deputy Grand Chief of the GCCEI/CRA Matthew Mukash on their opposition to this Agreement in Principle.

Josie Jimikin
Deputy Chief
Nemaska First Nation



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CREEACTIONS

Once again we have recieved so many letters at the Nation concerning the AIP that we are devoting a section just for them. Some people have said that the reason why we aren't recieveing so many letters in support is that some people are afraid of the stigma that may be attached to being in favour of the AIP. As I have said in the editorial we will allow anonymous letters as long as we at the Nation know who has sent them. Once agian we hope that the band offices will allow you to use their fax so that all can participat. Our fax is: 514-278-9914 and you can email us at: nation@beesum.ca

To write to us see the masthead on page four.

Editor, THE NATION.

After studying the Agreement in Principle I am compelled to write some of my comments and thoughts to you and your readers. I got involved in aboriginal politics since I was 18 years of age when the Elders of our community asked that I start helping our people. I had good teachers like Chief Smally Petawabano, Chief Robert Kanatewat and the late Chief Josie Sam Atkinson and many others both young and old. In the early years back in the late sixties we were told that we had no rights and that we were just squatters on the land and that the Cree way of life was dying and that we were all going to end up as wards of the state. Housing, education, health and community socio-economic development was unheard of back in those days when our people lived in poverty, tent frame shacks, squalor, no running water, no electricity, few jobs with welfare wages and many other obstacles and barriers.

When the James Bay hydro-electric project was announced in April 28, 1971, it was the young people like Philip Awashish and others that motivated the Cree Chiefs to organize the first ever recorded meeting of the Cree leadership in Cree history and that led to the fight to have our rights recognized through the Courts, then the negotiations leading up to signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement on November 11, 1975, then the negotiations for the amendments of many pieces of provincial legislation to make our rights recognized in existin or new legislation, there have been many negotiations for the implementation of the JBNQA since 1975 and it was a fight all the way. Numerous court cases have been started and I get nervous when you ask the courts to defend Cree rights. It is not a Cree justice system, there is danger that the Courts can rule against you like in the EMI decision. It was against the Crees and the Crees lost.

This is where negotiations have become very important. The avenue to achieving further recognition of Cree rights is negotiations at a table based on trust and faith. Every negotiator dreams that all negotiations should be on a mutual working relationship. Even in negotiations, however, there is still a fight to have your rights recognized as we found our through the Cree-Naskapi Act negotiations and legislation and the Canadian Constitution negotiations where we got the Cree rights entrenched and the JBNQA and all its complimentary agreements recognized as a treaty and treaty rights. It was a battle but we won the day through some very tough negotiations.

Now we see the Agreement in Principle of October 23, 2001, that this was done through some very tough negotiations. The Agreement brings together all the matters that were on the many tables since 1976 and brings them to forefront of implementation.

After years of difficulties in implementation there is now a firm commitment that the Cree will have the resources to do much more



Grand Chief ted Moses, Negotiator Abel Bosum and lawyer for the Cree Robert Mainville share a laugh in Mistissini.

than just implementation of their rights but to develop their own future at a pace that the Crees want to, not at the whim of somebody else. Crees have to become masters of their own destiny and the New relationship with Quebec, based on Nation to Nation, gives the Crees an unprecedented opportunity. It is up to us to take this opportunity and we should not let it slip away.

I know many of us are upset about process but let us concentrate on the content. As I said at the community meeting in Waskaganish that the governments do not make these kind of offers on a daily basis, the governments are serious about settling the issues with the Crees when they make these kind of agreements and we will never see this kind of offer again. Opportunities like this come once in a life time. I mean it. It will not happen again in our lifetime. This is unprecedented and unparalleled in its magnitude. Think for a moment that a Prime Minister and a Grand Chief meet to discuss what it would take to solve the problems and an offer is developed that includes most of everything that we the Cree leadership has been putting forward for the last 26 years. This is unheard of and the solution can come about with us and our participation. This is possible now. After years of fighting and Quebec bashing we are finally going to get down to serious work.. After studying the Agreement in Principle, there is enough work there for all those who want to get involved and no one should feel that they are left out. Why even us old warriors are being asked to come back and help. The snow is on the roof and the bones are a little weary but the fire to fight and to help our people is still there.

We have been fighting for a long time. What have we been fighting for? When you fight for a long and all your life, it feels like something is wrong when suddenly the Grand Chief comes and tells us there is an agreement and peace. I said in Waskaganish that I was in shock. It was so sudden. Why was I not consulted? Why this offer?

But I agree that we have to stop fighting sooner or later. For 26 years we fought for the implementation of the JBNQA and all its related legislation. We fought for something real for our people. If we get away from all of the strong feelings for a moment. We have to ask: Does the AIP give us what we have been fighting for? That is the question.

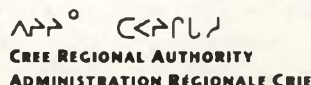
We have been fighting for Cree rights. We have been fighting for

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Assuming Control in Eeyou Istchee

In the past there were major disagreements with Quebec and Canada on Cree community and economic development in the Territory. Through the AIP we will now decide our own priorities. We will work with Quebec to make development deliver opportunities for our people and growth for Quebec. Once the final agreement is signed we will have a greatly improved ability to provide housing and jobs for Crees.

This agreement will implement Quebec's obligations under section 28; the Grand Chief has called upon Canada to fully meet its obligations with regard to the development of the James Bay Territory, Eeyou Istchee, as set out in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.



our share in the resources and that ability to develop those resources at a benefit to our people. When a person is a Chief he or she gets very frustrated of repeatedly going to the governments for the administration of their own welfare. We now have a chance at building a secure future for our greatest resource- our people. We have an opportunity here to develop and protect further our Cree water rights. But better still we have a chance at our own future with both Quebec and Canada. It is up to us and let us make it a Cree debate.

Let us set aside our own internal prejudices and go beyond the veil of money. There is too much at stake here to warrant our own personal agendas but to think of our future as a Cree Nation. I commend people who have their own opinion but we need to work together for the sake of the Cree Nation. When I sat on the Board/ Council of the GCCQ and the CRA, I disagreed with my fellow Chiefs on O&M Negotiations and I refused to sign the agreement but I stayed and did my best to work out a better agreement. When the Police Agreement was negotiated I also disagreed and I refused to sign it but I did not walk out on my fellow Chiefs. Again when I got blasted for negotiating the 1993 MOU Agreement, the former Deputy Grand Chief did not agree and he even had his own press conference but he did not walk out on his fellow Chiefs. You are allowed to disagree but let us work it out through a Cree debate and let it be a Cree debate.

The A.I.P. gives the Crees what we have been fighting for. Not everything. But it goes a long way. No one ever gets everything they want in any negotiations. Quebec asks for Cree consent for two projects. Quebec sees the Cree Nation with resource rights over all our territory, not just Category I or Category II lands. We have come a long way since 1974 when Quebec said we had no rights. So all of this fighting has helped Quebec understand that there are Cree rights.

Not everyone thinks this is a good idea. I understand that. There have always been Crees who disagreed with leadership. We don't always have to agree. I have had my own disagreements, but I didn't walk away from this discussion. I stayed to listen, to ask questions, and to hear the answers. If you walk out of the room because you are angry or surprised you are making a mistake. You can't say you are just against this deal, and then not listen to what others have to say.

There are 13,000 Crees who want to build a future. We need to know that our children will have a future if they stay in the community. Think about this and get all the information you can. I think we have to give negotiators and the Grand Chief a chance to bring this deal home to our people, and then judge what is best for all the Crees for the next 50 years. As I said, you won't see anything as big as this again. That is the reality.

Ask God for wisdom to guide us in our deliberation and He will provide the wisdom and knowledge. Let your gifting give you leadership.

Yours in Peace and Friendship,
Dr. Billy "Chief" Diamond

October 23, 2001

I am old and weak, mercury travels through my veins, I was diagnosed with diabetes a few decades ago, I have trouble breathing, I have cancer, my moccasins are made of canvas, my grand-son died at a very young age, he never lived to kill his first goose, nor had he celebrated his walking out ceremony;

I came to die on my trap line in peace, but it is impossible. There are no trees from the devastation of our land from the logging companies, the river is dry, it does not flow anymore, it is dead, the mountains have disappeared from the minings, there are no birds

to sing their songs. It is quiet, the weather has changed, I am cold...I do not recognize this land, our land;

We never got the 3.5 Billion we were promised, the government never fulfilled their obligations, our nation has died gradually over the years, first was our beliefs, our traditions, then came our culture, our way of life...we could not hunt, fish and trap;

They say it was from the historical Agreement we have signed with the government of Quebec, I should have fought, I should have fought for my people, our rights and our land, and for the generations to come.

Some say that the man that signed the Agreement died of arsenic poisoning, some say he died in his cottage in the Laurentians, I don't know, I do not remember him, I believe his name was Moses, all I remember is he and among other "leaders" were responsible in destroying the foundation of our Nation.

My nightmare is ending now, I am dying, I wish I had one last feast with my friends and family around a camp fire, but I am alone, my last wish is to eat some moose, some goose, fresh fish, beaver...I don't remember what it tastes like, I'm going to die now, eat the last crumbs of my bannock!



WITHOUT OUR CONSENT - Does our leadership have a hidden agenda?

I am most grateful that the GCCQ Council of Chiefs and the Government of Quebec have agreed to their common willingness to settle their differences. I commend the Cree leadership for standing solidly with the GCCQ administration to formulate and conduct a policy of implementing the long outstanding obligations by the Government of Quebec regarding the provisions of the 1975 James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement. I believe that the past and present Cree leadership of the nine Cree Nations of Northern Quebec appreciate the determination of the Moses Administration to fight and commence a new nation-to-nation relationship between the Crees and Quebec.

However, without the consent of our people, it is noticeable that the Cree leadership have failed the Cree populace by neglecting the traditional practice of common democracy without proper community consultation. Our leadership have betrayed our land and its inhabitants, our elders, our youth, our children and our grandchildren. Can we continue to trust our chiefs and grandchief?

We're having to adjust our thinking and we're learning that our leadership are not what they seem to be - trustworthy, honest, faithful, loyal, and most important, respectful. I understand our people are concerned and they should be. We must take careful inventory of this agreement and give faithful account to those we

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Striking a balance between firmness and social responsibility



Hydro-Québec and social responsibility

Hydro-Québec regards electricity as an essential service for residential customers during the winter months, and its collection policy reflects its sense of social responsibility. Accordingly, the company does not interrupt service for failure to pay between December 1 and April 1, except in the case of business customers. This period can be adjusted depending on prevailing weather conditions.

When the cold weather sets in, Hydro-Québec also restores service to all previously disconnected residential customers who depend on electricity for their heating, so as not to compromise their well-being. However, these customers are still required to pay their outstanding balance if they want to avoid having their service cut off again in the spring.

Each year, approximately 10% of Hydro-Québec's customers—or nearly 400,000 Quebecers—don't pay their electricity bills on time. This represents millions of dollars in unpaid bills that Hydro-Québec must collect. Customers are under the obligation to pay for their electricity in the same way that they must pay for their telephone or cable service. It's a simple matter of fairness.

balance over time. This way, they can avoid getting further into debt, particularly in winter when they consume more electricity to heat their homes. Winter is therefore an ideal time to develop good payment habits. Rather than let your debt build up, it's much better to agree on a payment schedule and then make regular payments.

Firmness and fairness to everyone

Hydro-Québec's firmness stems from its desire to keep its rates stable while remaining on a sound financial footing. However, the company also sympathizes with customers who cannot keep up with their payments. If such is your case, don't wait for things to get worse: call us without delay at the number on your late payment or service interruption notice to work out a payment arrangement.

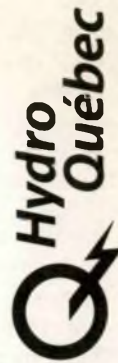
Disconnection: A last resort

Hydro-Québec's collection policy is firm and fair. Customers who are behind in their payments are notified several times, by phone and in writing.

If a customer receives a service interruption notice, it's because previous attempts to work out a payment arrangement have proven unsuccessful. Disconnection is an extreme measure, used only when all else fails.

Payment arrangements: Getting a handle on the situation

While it treats all its customers fairly, Hydro-Québec is willing to work out payment arrangements with those who are experiencing financial difficulties. Customers in this situation should contact a Hydro-Québec representative to negotiate an acceptable agreement that will allow them to pay down their outstanding



owe an obligation of trust, which is our people.

The task must begin at home. When the youngest child alive today has grown to the cares of adulthood, our position will be determined, first of all, by what provisions we make today - for education, health, and opportunities for a good home, a good job and a good life. What we do today will affect our children and grandchildren. To the youth, this is our calling. This is the time for us to act in a bold way, we must take our inherent place in the Cree leadership circle and we must do just that.

In the past, we have stood behind the Cree leadership in protecting our way of life against Forestry, Hydro Electric Projects and Mining. Our cooperation was very strong and very evident. Although we will generously benefit from this monetary gain, the outcome is by no means certain, the answers are by no means clear. All of us together must forge those answers.

It is just unacceptable behaviour for our leadership to agree to an agreement in principle rather than taking the unique opportunity of negotiating a long term agreement such as our inherent right to self government. By agreeing to this agreement in principle, we are being forced to retreat from the lawsuits that we have initiated and we are forced to value money rather than the protection our homeland.

We need to be reassured that this is a stepping stone towards self governancy. I hope that our Cree leadership will do everything they possibly can to protect our land and our Cree way of life. I know we are strong enough to endure because we're a kind and compassionate nation with strong values and we value life.

Leonard Matthews

Leonard Matthews is a Cree from Waswanipi, Quebec. He's in his final year of the Law Clerk (Legal Assistant) program at Canadore College in North Bay, Ontario. He's the current Chairperson of the Canadore Aboriginal Student Association which represents over 300 Aboriginal Post Secondary Students.



The Rupert River at Smokey Hill

Dear Nation,

Development of energy efficiency technologies and renewable energy resources will make far more electricity available than would destruction of the Rupert and Eastmain Rivers.

We deeply regret that our Cree friends must struggle to defend your lands, again and again. What we wish for you is peace. But we also continue to support your courageous protection of the precious natural resources in your region, and would like to help in any way we can.

The good boat ODEYAK is always welcome on the Hudson River!

Doris Delaney (for PROTECT)

Of No Importance

My name is of no importance for the time being. I am a Cree youth representative speaking my thoughts on what I think about the Agreement in Principle. In this new agreement there is a lot to be said, and a lot to be asked about the matters contained in it, but I will not raise those kinds of questions.

When I first heard about this, just as many did, I too was shocked and more or less denied. I was shocked because I was more or less the last one to be told about this. And I was denied because like many other youth representatives across the Cree Nation who have nothing to do with the Agreement in Principle. Grand Chief Ted Moses pointed out that 'this agreement is for the youth and for the future of the Cree Nation.'

If it had been for the youth, we the youth would have had suggestions, recommendations, and ideas of what should have been contained in this agreement in principle, but it does not.

I do not agree with this Agreement in Principle. Why should I allow such forces of self-destruction hail across my land?

What will happen to me when and if this agreement goes through? I don't know the answer but I can give you a wild guess. And this may apply to everyone as well as those who go through some of what I too am going through these days of my life. The answer is; Nothing.

Will I finally get a job? Probably not. Will I finally be financially secure and rich? Probably not. Will I finally get what I want? Probably not. You too can ask yourselves the same questions over and over. And I can give you the answer to every self-determining question you can think of which the answer will probably be NOT or NO.

Some will say, but the money will go a little here, a little there, a little over there, more here, more there, more over there, and of all this money going around and round we go, the possibilities are endless.

And what about the land which we foremost take for pride, respect and living? Sure some say it's understandable if we agree to allow such forces to destroy our lands, rivers, and forests for money, when these days money is what basically keeps us alive and together. I think not.

In the eyes of the hunter or trapper, money is not everything, but in the eyes of the worker or employee, money is everything. How do we justify what is the best course of action? How do we decide if this agreement is good, bad, or ugly? And where exactly do we want to go?

Our self-determination will form the best course of action of what to agree upon. I say, if there is to be a Cree Government, it should be called the Cree Nation Command. And this new Cree Government should, with the consent of the Cree Nation, command a new agreement to the Premier of Quebec, then Canada, to outline every need, every want, every must, every idea, and every thought

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that is there to form a new relationship, and to commence the economic development(s) in our communities without further inflicting more harm to ourselves, and the land. We the Cree have every right to reject this agreement in principal and form a new agreement in principle as a counteraction to this act by the Premier, furthermore without a deadline so that we may finally achieve the glory of our self-determination without obligation.

If I was the Grand Chief, I would listen more to my people so that I come up with ideas on how to fight the rampant poverty that in our communities. I would ask the people from every corner of the Cree Nation to give me ideas and thoughts, no matter how insignificant or impossible, to allow progress and wonderous ventures



Canada

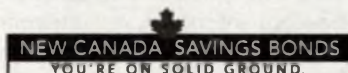
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to proceed with great triumph, so that I am exactly that of which is expected of me. The Grand Chief, the leader of all chiefs.

I do not think much of the Agreement in Principle, because I wasn't there to say what should have been included in this Agreement in Principle.

I have told you the part of me that thinks not. And now I will share with you the part of me that thinks 'why not.' Why not say, 'Yeah! This is Great!' Of course I would be contradicting myself, but nevertheless the possibilities are endless.

Because of what I want to achieve, build, create and determine, because of what I want to be, of what I want to see, of what I want to reach, of what I want to command, of what I want to conquer, of what I want to rebel, of what I want to shock, of what I want to hold, of what I want to dream is because of the part of me that says, "Why not!" But I would be putting myself first, ahead of everybody else.

I urge you not to agree to this Agreement in Principal. Unless, for a moment in time I was allowed to achieve, build, create, determine, be, see, reach, command, conquer, rebel, shock, hold, and dream all at the same time and place, I would consent to such an agreement to proceed but like I said, I was not part of this agreement nor do I have anything to do with this agreement, therefore I think not.

To the Grand Chief of the Cree Nation, I know you said that the only reason why you signed this agreement in principle was because you wanted to bring back something concrete instead of always coming back empty handed. Well, now is your chance to bring back something more than what is being offered on the table. The will of the people.

The will of the people lies before you as it has been dormant for many a millenia, and now the people have awoken again. Will you lead them to great triumph and victory, so that the future is kept for another millenia a generation to evolve beyond this state of mind? Or will you let the dragon sleep to be awakened by another only to bring great glory to the people? A simple yes or no will suffice.

Just remember, I will not wait much longer for our self-determination to shed some light on the people while we are still much in need. As they say, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few." I know there are those of us who are beginning to do anything to achieve something more than what we can wish for, because I am one of them. And one day, if nothing is what it seems should have been, I will make certain the needs of the few outweigh the needs of the many. Take this how you please I will not explain myself what I really mean by it.

One more comment about the Agreement in Principle to the Premier of Quebec. Fifty years is a long time for me to live and I'll be 81 years old by then. 70 million dollars won't cover my expenses during that time. If the Premier wants my vote, he'll have to pay the Cree Nation at large a sum of 80 billion dollars tax free during the course of the agreement's life span. And this is non-negotiable. Thank you for your time.

**Sincerely,
Prime Director**

Update – Community Consultation on Cree Quebec Agreement

November 7th, 2001

The Agreement in Principle was signed on October 23rd, 2001 in Quebec City, immediately thereafter the entire Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Regional Authority flew to Waskaganish to begin explaining to the people of Eeyou Istchee the content of the Agreement in Principle. This was done as the GCC(EI)/CRA was also well aware of the need to explain the process of negotiations that had led to the AIP and the reasons for holding the discussions with Quebec. It was important to get the most accurate information out as soon as possible in order to answer the peoples' questions.

In all communities the members expressed surprise at the announcement of the signing of the Agreement in Principle. The Council explained the reasons for the discussions with Quebec, gave a detailed account of the content of the Agreement in Principle and reviewed the next steps. The negotiators and the Grand Chief answered questions and provided details on the discussions and Agreement.

Waskaganish Community Consultation (October 23rd, 2001) – Present: GCC(EI)/CRA Board-Council, and negotiators.

The community consultation in Waskaganish was spread over two days as the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Regional Authority had arrived late on the first day. The James Bay Communications Society broadcast the meeting live to the other Cree communities. Initially emotions were high in the community as people tried to come to terms with what had been announced. The initial questions from community members related to whether by signing the AIP the Council had already consented to the diversion of the Rupert River. After a lengthy discussion it became clear to the members that the Crees still had the power to decide and that the diversion was not approved.

Billy Diamond asked questions with regards to the nature of the Agreement in Principle. He stated that although he was unsure as to the future of the Rupert River, he was sure that if the Crees rejected the offer they might save the River but would never see an equivalent monetary settlement.

The community members then began to reflect on the content of the Agreement in Principle and less on the process that led to it. Trappers who would be directly affected by the proposed Rupert diversion stated, that they could not think only of their own interests and that they would take the Agreement in Principle and other information from the meeting and when the time came, make a decision based on the future of the Cree people as a whole.

There were some youth from the community who had great difficulty with the Agreement in Principle as they did not want

the River to be diverted and who apparently did not understand or value its financial aspects. Other youth stated support because of the economic and community development potentials of the AIP. There were also those who expressed a dislike of the proposed Rupert Diversion while stating that there were elements in the Agreement in Principle that were very positive.

The Waskaganish consultation ended with a general commitment to reflect on the information that was provided and to be provided in the future, and to make a decision that was appropriate for the Cree People when the time came.

Oujé-Bougoumou Community Consultation
(October 29th, 2001) – The following members of the Council and negotiators were present for the meeting: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief John Longchap, Chief Paul Gull, Abel Bosum and John Paul Murdoch

The community had to deal with not only with the announcement of the Agreement in Principle but also with the release of results of a study that demonstrated that the water in the area had been severely contaminated with toxic substances. The questions from the community members therefore related to the ability of Crees to hold organizations that polluted the environment accountable for their actions. Community members were assured that the right to hold individuals or organizations accountable through the courts or other means was not negatively affected by the AIP. Further, it was explained that with the AIP funding the Crees would become developers of the territory themselves and would be more able to influence forestry policy to make the cutting practices more respectful of the land and Cree needs.

Some members of the community expressed support for the Agreement in Principle, however all wanted more information on the impacts to the land of the proposed hydro-electric development project.

Mistissini Community Consultation (October 30th, 2001) -The following members of the Council were present: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash, Chief John Longchap, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief Paul Gull, Abel Bosum, Bill Namagoose, Robert Mainville and John Paul Murdoch

As at Waskaganish, there was much concern over the confidential nature of the process that had led up to the Agreement in Principle. After thorough explanation the community understood the reasons for the process and the importance and number of the issues involved. Questions were also asked as to how the communities would express their consent



GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREE (EYOU ASTCHEE)
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EYOU ASTCHEE)



CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATION REGIONALE CRIE

Update – Community Consultation on Cree Quebec Agreement

or rejection of the final agreement. Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses stated that as the Agreement in Principle had already been concluded and the need for a referendum on the Final Agreement would be an issue to be decided by the Cree Chiefs at a special GCC(EI)/CRA Council/Board meeting to be called for that purpose.

At the meeting it was evident that some of the documents that had been circulated in the community had created false and misleading impressions of the Agreement in Principle. This required the community consultation team to correct misapprehensions about rights, indexation formulas and what had been consented to. There was also misinformation with regards to the nature and extent of impacts on Mistissini traplines and whether Lake Mistissini would be affected by the Rupert Diversion Project. The information in the possession of the community consultation team demonstrated that there would be no effect on the water level of Lake Mistissini. The team however undertook to obtain more complete information and to have it presented to the community so that members could make an informed decision.

While they had concerns for the land, community members also spoke in support of the Agreement in Principle, as in their view it contained opportunities that would benefit future generations. The need for more employment opportunities was seen as a major reason for supporting the Agreement in Principle.

Waswanipi Community Consultation (October 31st, 2001) – The following members of the Council and negotiators were present: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash, Chief Paul Gull, Chief John Longchap, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief Robert Weistche, Abel Bosum, Bill Namagoose, Robert Mainville and John Paul Murdoch

In the community of Waswanipi one youth who spoke very well and expressed what has been the reaction of many people throughout Eeyou Istchee. He stated when he first heard the announcement of the Agreement he was shocked and angry and that when he read the Agreement in Principle and tried to substantiate his anger, he was instead surprised to find that Agreement in Principle contained elements that would be very beneficial to the Crees over the long term.

The discussion over the proposed forestry regime in the Agreement in Principle demonstrated the differing interests involved and the reason that it is often difficult to find solutions to the many issues. On the one hand a trapper expressed his approval of the provisions that would make forestry more compatible with the Cree way of life and wanted stricter provisions in the Agreement on forest cutting. On the other hand there were those individuals employed by Mishtuk and Nabakatuk, the Waswanipi forestry companies, who while often supporting a new forestry regime also expressed concern about the impact

of the proposed measures on the viability of the forest operations.

Nemaska Community Consultation (November 1st, 2001) – Members of the Council and negotiator present: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Chief George Wapache, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief Robert Weistche, Bill Namagoose, Abel Bosum, Robert Mainville and John Paul Murdoch

In Nemaska there was a small but vocal opposition to the Agreement in Principle. In addition to environmental concerns, this group's opposition to the Agreement in Principle was also premised on the idea that the Rupert Diversion was approved by the AIP - which was not true. Second they were under the misapprehension that the Agreement in Principle extinguished rights that the Crees had fought so hard to get. After the opposing individuals had stated their concerns, many of the trappers who would be affected by the proposed Rupert Diversion and Eastmain Dam and other trappers expressed qualified support for the Agreement in Principle as it brought the promise of future employment for the youth. The support did however come with the request that every effort be taken so that the employment created would in fact go to Cree individuals, as in the past even Cree entities had had inadequate native hiring practices.

Although it was a long and emotional community consultation, Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses and the negotiating team left with renewed energy and resolve to negotiate a Final Agreement in the best interests of the Cree People.

Eastmain Community Consultation (November 2nd, 2001) - The following members of the Council and negotiators were present: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Chief Edward Gilpin, Chief Robert Weistche, Chief Sam Bosum, Abel Bosum and John Paul Murdoch.

The community of Eastmain welcomed home Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses and applauded his efforts. Many of the community members expressed support for the Agreement in Principle. Having recently gone through the experience of a hydro-electric project, the trappers of Eastmain offered their support and advice to GCC(EI)/CRA as well as to the communities to be affected by the Rupert Diversion/Eastmain Project proposed in the Agreement in Principle. They stated that they had a great deal of information that would be useful to the GCC (EI) when negotiating with Hydro-Quebec. They added that the affected trappers would be able to adapt to many of the changes in landscape to be caused by the hydro project as the Eastmain trappers have had to on their own lands as a result of La Grande Project. The trappers recognized that dealing with the possible impacts to the land would not be an easy matter, but in light of the potential benefits to all Crees offered by the Agreement in Principle, it would be worthwhile.



**GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ASTCHEE)
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EYYOU ASTCHEE)**



CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
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Update – Community Consultation on Cree Quebec Agreement

Wemindji Community Consultation (November 3rd, 2001) – The following members of Council and negotiators were present at the meeting: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Chief Reggie Mark, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief David Masty, Abel Bosum and John Paul Murdoch

Many of the members of the community of Wemindji who spoke at the meeting expressed support for the Agreement in Principle. Some of the trappers expressed the view that in the future there would not be a sufficiently large land base if all Crees wanted to practice the traditional way of life and that the Agreement in Principle offered hope of employment for those youth who were unable or unwilling to practice the Cree way of life on a full time basis.

As there is extensive mining exploration activity in the Wemindji area, there was concern about opening up the territory to non-native development. This concern however was weighed by many against the financial resources and employment offered in the Agreement in Principle that in their view gave the Crees the opportunity to be developers. They stated that the new relationship with Quebec would also help to ensure that future development would happen in a manner more compatible with the Cree way of life.

Chisasibi Community Consultation (November 5th, 2001) – The following members of Council and negotiators were present: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Chief Violet Pachanos, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief David Masty, Chief John Longchap, Chief Paul Gull, Abel Bosum and John Paul Murdoch.

Having experienced the effects of the La Grande Hydroelectric Complex, the community members of Chisasibi offered their support and advice to the communities to be affected by the proposed Rupert Diversion/Eastmain Project. Community members stated that over the years they had learned a great deal and were more than willing to share it.

Robert Kanatawat, former chief, thanked the Grand Chief and his negotiators for their efforts in negotiating the Agreement in Principle. He stated that he was particularly pleased to see that the Agreement in Principle was a natural extension of the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement and implemented rights that so many had fought so long to acquire.

Many in Chisasibi stated that the Agreement in Principle gave hope for employment for the many youth who to date had had few employment prospects.

Whapmagoostui Community Consultation (November 6th, 2001) – The following members of Council and negotiators were present in the meeting: Grand Chief Ted Moses, Deputy Grand Chief Matthew Mukash, Chief David Masty, Chief Sam Bosum, Chief David Masty, Chief John Longchap, Chief Paul

Gull, Abel Bosum and John Paul Murdoch.

Like in other communities, members expressed their concerns over the confidential manner in which the Agreement in Principle was negotiated and their concern about whether the Quebec government had dictated the agenda of the discussions. The Grand Chief reassured everyone that the process was kept confidential as without this there would have been great difficulty in reaching a real possibility of settlement. Complicated court proceedings, frank exchanges of view on the issues and detailed financial proposals made confidentiality important for both parties. Further, he demonstrated that the Agreement in Principle was based on Cree demands and Cree needs and expressed by Cree representatives.

As in other communities there was a concern for the next steps in the process and a request for more information.

Over View

In each community there are many individuals who support the Agreement in Principle and others who expressed opposition to it, or to some aspects of it. There was a consensus among all people though, that more information would be needed. The GCC(EI)/CRA committed to provide more information as quickly as it is possible to obtain it. Individuals were also encouraged to provide any suggestions or to express any concerns that they may have to any of the following addresses:

Agreement in Principle

GCC(EI)/CRA
2 Lakeshore Road
Nemaska, Quebec
J0Y 3B0

Fax: 819 -673-2600

Agreement in Principle

GCC(EI)/CRA
81 Metcalfe St., Suite 900
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6K7

Fax: 613-761-1388

Agreement in Principle

GCC(EI)/CRA
277 Duke St., Suite 100
Montreal, Quebec
H3C 2M2

Fax: 514-861-0760

Consultations are planned with the Post-Secondary Students of the Cree School Board in Montreal, Ottawa and North Bay.



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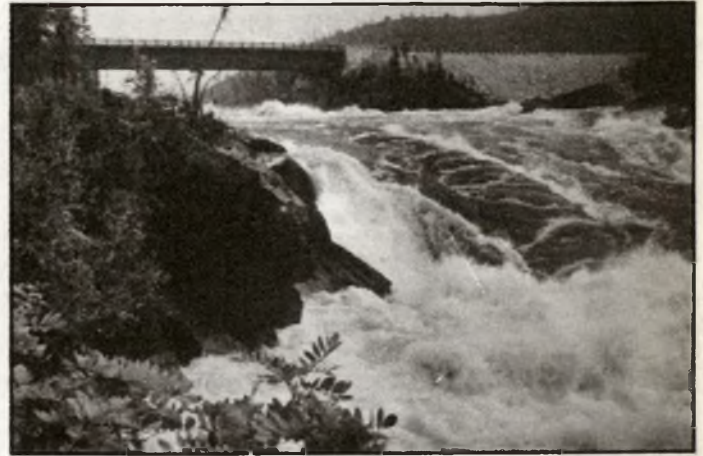
The River Runs through Us

-David Seagal-

The Rupert River in Quebec is a great Canadian river, offering a wealth of growth and adventure. The Rupert has been used for many years by the Cree people of the James Bay area. It is known for its gigantic waterfalls, tough, technical portages and campsites lined with beautiful teepees. In September 2001 a group of students participating in an intensive whitewater leadership development program spent an exhilarating week on the Rupert. When a group of people set out on a journey of this nature, there is bound to be growth. Growth is enhanced if the group is secure and nurturing and even more so when the environment is rich in natural beauty and isolation. With the new road accessing Waskaganish, getting there by car is now possible. So on September 20th the W.I.L.D. group loaded up their gear and embarked on a journey that would alter their lives forever. The drive from Davidson, Quebec is 12 hours of rich forest, taking you around pristine lakes and into the Hudson Bay lowland which is flat, straight and filled with black spruce. Arriving at the James Bay highway bridge, just as the sun was slipping behind the tips of the trees we caught a glimpse of the raging Rupert flowing below. The power of the river and its soothing sounds sung us to sleep.

The Rupert River has breathtaking waterfalls, the earth literally crumbles away as the river races downstream, colliding with the boulder strewn river bed as gravity pulls it closer to the ocean. The river is a symphony of chaotic beauty. Thousands of sounds; water colliding with earth. The immensity and power of the river surpassed our wildest dreams. We had brought a fleet of state of the art whitewater canoes. Practiced extensively on other rivers, but still we had to portage much more than we expected. Steep, muddy embankments, wet, slippery rocks and dead fall are common along the boulder filled trails that follow the river. The life of a voyageur is far from easy. Its challenges are demanding often sending you on simultaneous journeys through the mind, body and soul. This "other" journey is met on cold rainy days and on these difficult portages. You never truly expect it. In these times of great difficulty I believe the most wonderful outcomes are attainable. People going through their simultaneous journeys, sometimes shed tears, other times are quiet and determined. I heard people talking about the youth brigades from the town of Waskaganish traveling these paths, not only going downstream, but also upstream. The thought of such an achievement helped us keep moving and fueled our alternate journeys.

There are flat sections of the Rupert, where a slight current



floats beneath your canoe, enabling you to relax and relish in the sameness of a landscape winding for many kilometers. Often only changing ever so slightly. It is this simplicity that I value on canoe trips. I soak up my surroundings without being distracted or overloaded. These moments of appreciation for the land, often found while paddling long flat stretches, standing beside a rapid or watching the sun go down, take you into your alternate journey. This is where any cracks or holes that might have appeared during the day are mended and strengthened.

The Rupert flows into James Bay. Here the river meets the sky and here at the town of Waskaganish, our physical journey ended. Once the experience is over it is then possible to look back objectively and notice the changes in one's confidence, self esteem, interaction with others, etc. I believe these wonderful outcomes are possible when fear is pushed aside allowing passions and dreams to become direct manifestations of your own actions. While on a canoe trip you can't realistically fear failure, because life is happening right now. You don't have time to imagine fear, for the moments are too real and you are overcoming challenges just by being able to smile, breath and laugh despite things being so tough. Your actions allow you to finish the hard portage; your actions allow you to push on through rain, wind and cold and your actions allow you to relish the satisfaction at the end of a day knowing that you brought yourself there.

The Rupert River happened to be the setting for our growth and adventure. The towering pines, the powerful water and the vastness of the land lent a helping hand in our development. It was the catalyst needed to speed our growth. And just because the trip is over, the journey continues, the river runs through us.

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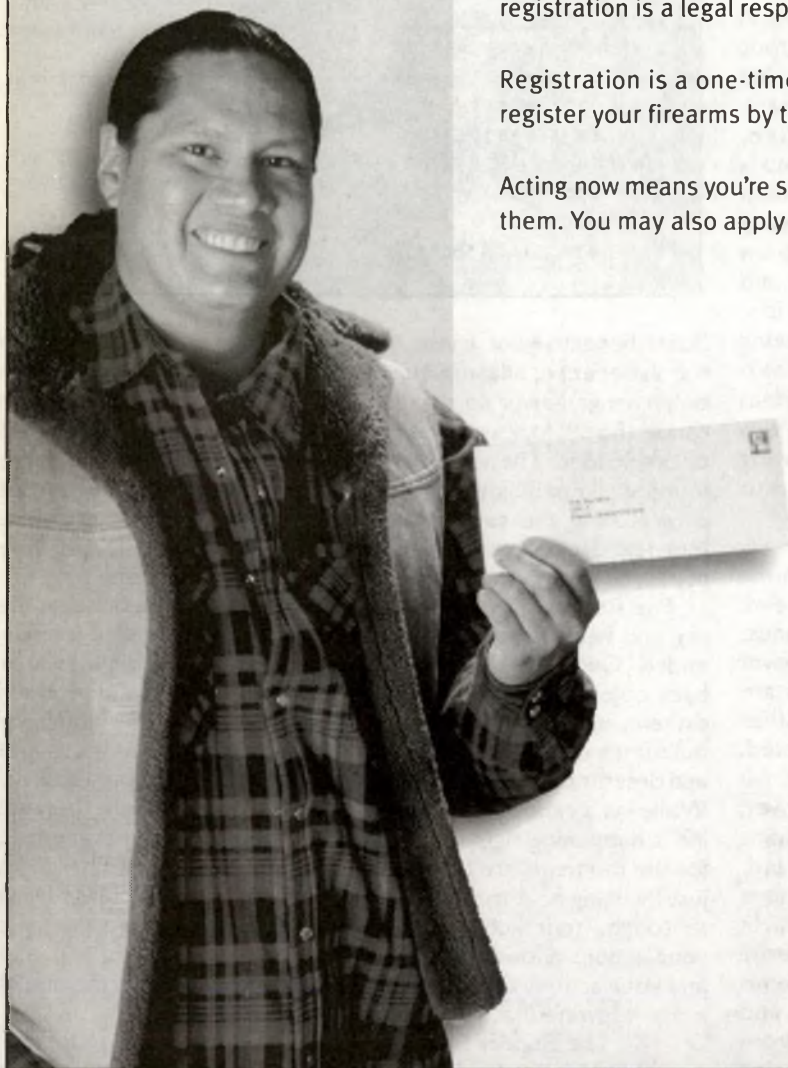
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- **By law**, all firearms must be registered by the end of 2002.



For more information, call 1 800 731-4000
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Canada

CLASSIFIEDS

100 - Births

Special Congratulations to Aaron Neeposh and Rachelle Lafond on the birth of their adorable daughter, Crystal Jenelle born on September 5th 2001. Thanks to the parents for carrying on the name Crystal. Much love to both of you and your girls. From Reggie, Sophia, Darius & Terrance.

101 - Birthdays

We would like to wish a happy belated birthday to Willard Napash on October 12, Helen Bobbish on October 26 and George Napash on October 29 2001. From: Anita and kids. (Chisasibi)

Happy 9th Birthday! I would like to say Happy Birthday to my one & only son "Michael Travis Ashamock" on November 23rd 2001 in Fort Albany. Hope you enjoy your birthday son and we love you. From: Mom and Dad and sis Melinda in Fort Albany, ON.

A birthday wish going out to my husband Waseguinn Gunner who celebrated his birthday on November 16th. Happy Birthday honey and many more to come. And I love you with all my heart. Love, Carole.

Happy Birthday to my mom Louise D. Kitchen on November 20th. I hope you have some fun on your B-Day. Cause getting old can affect your memory... just kidding. All I wanted to say is "Happy Birthday Mom". Love, Carole.

Happy Birthday to Trevor Leroy Moar on November 21. We love you and we miss you. From: your niece (Miranda) and your nephew (Brandon'sh) North Bay.

I would like to say Happy Birthday to my sister Freda Bobbish on November 29 and to my cousin Stephanie Napash also on November 29 2001 Hope you'll have fun on birthdays and i can't wait to see you sis. from :Charlene Bobbish (Montreal)

I would like to say Happy belated 5th Birthday to my niece Josianne Bobbish Sam Hope your birthday is as special as you are and Good

luck on your first year of school from: Charlene Bobbish (Montreal)

We would like to say a Happy 70th Birthday to noohkum and anshikuushu (Googoosh) Nellie House Sr. on December 4, 2001. We're sorry we can't be there on your special day, but we hope you rest. Have a day off, don't cook or clean! From Bessie & Daleanna in Mtl. P.S. We miss your cooking.

I would like to wish a happy 2nd birthday to my beautiful niece Miracle Masty from Great Whale River. Her birthday is on Christmas Day which is December 25. I hope you get all the toys and candy you want on your special day. From your favorite uncle...you know who I am.

To R.N. I am so happy to have met you, for I know that you're a very wonderful girl and you're so special to my life, I am very blessed to have met you. I will never forget just how we met at the corner of bank and sunset. This One sweet moment, Today I treasure within my heart and soul. Thank you so much for being you, the friend that you are to my life. For your beautiful smile, and for always brightening up my days, even through distance and time. I Thank-you today for your precious friendship, I will always cherish you so dearly, In true friendship and Love, From your (best friend) Tommyboy.

Wishing a beautiful and Happy birthday to my precious little niece in waswanipi, on Dec. 24th, Abigail Blacksmith. I Love You always, from your uncle Tom.

To a loving and caring friend of mine who has always stood by me and been there for me like no one else has ever been, Thank-you Cyn. I will always be there for you, each step of the way, just has much as you will always be there for me. Just wanted you to know just how much I love you, my dear friend. In true friendship and love, T.P.

We would like to say a Happy Belated Birthday to my cousin and uncle David House on November

27, 2001 and to my aunt and googoom Sandra House on November 21, 2001 who are both in Mtl. We hope you guys enjoy your special days. From Bessie & Daleanna in Mtl.

On this special day November 3 2001, we would like to wish our grandpa & great grandpa a happy birthday to Malcolm Hester in Waskaganish. We love you very much From: Anita & kids. (Chisasibi) xoxoxoxo

Happy 4th Birthday to Derius Mark on November 16th. Have fun and don't eat too much cake! Love always, Granny, Grandpa, Aunts, Uncles and your Cousins at 7, 10 Spruce Road.

I want to send special birthday greetings to my son Abel Petawabano on December 9th. My son you are growing up to be a remarkable young intelligent man and I am so proud of you and your accomplishments. Well my son another year has passed and

we are still kicking away, lol. I just want you to know that you can always count on me when you feel you can't go on; we will stick together through thick and thin. I love you my son so, so much and thank you for your love and kisses at the end of a hard day. Still don't forget who is the parent and even though you're growing up fast, you will still abide by my rules. I love you my sweet angel. With all my hugs and kisses, your mom Charlotte Wapachee.

A special person will celebrate her 3rd birthday on November 17th 2001, Emerald Iserhoff. We love you so very much. God blessed us to have you as our daughter. With lots of hugs and kisses. Love, Mom and Dad.

Belated Birthday wishes going out to my buddies; Betsie Matches, Ricky Lameboy on November 21st, 2001. Happy Birthday to Mary Matthew on December 6th and to Gracie Snow Snowboy on



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Mary Petawabano Baribeau

**Well Done
& Congratulations!**

CLASSIFIEDS

December 14th. Wishing you friends all the best that life has to offer and hope you all know how I feel very blessed to have friends like you. Friends I can count on anytime. In love in friendship, Cheryl Swallow.

We would like to wish a Happy Birthday to my grand mother, great grand mother Louise Icebound and to my aunt Stella Icebound. Both on November 20th, 2001. From Stephanie, Toronna and Lianne.

103 - Anniversaries

I would like to wish a Happy 19th Anniversary to my wonderful and caring parents. John and Maryanne Otter on July 12th 2001. I love you both very much even though I don't say it often. From Stephanie and your grand daughters Toronna and Lianne. XOXOXO

300 - Personals

Some people live their whole lives and never fall in love. They sit still like still waters waiting for it to come by, but for some people, they ride like the wind until it comes crashing by. I was like the wind at the beginning, in search for strength to mend my broken heart. But the search wasn't easy so I broke down on my knees and gave up. That was until it came to me, like an Angel sent from above. And I thank God from the bottom of my heart for giving me the opportunity to fall in love and for choosing you to occupy the space within my heart and soul. You are my reason to my everything and I'm proud to call you mine. Norman, I love you with everything I am. Truly, Naomi.

A few steps away, there you are. I know that we haven't given us a chance. I would like to get back with you soon babe. Her name is FW that is all I can reveal. When will we met up again New Year. I know you were looking for me last New Year, I was too babe. Just listen to "Roses & Pins" by Smokey, the words are there that I want to say. It is not too late for us, I want to get with you. I miss your voice

and your touch. Call me. From someone who still feels for you.

Please be advised that Jason Patrick Gull, as on act of Birth, is changing his name to Jason Patrick Neeposh. The application for a change of name is sent to the "Direction de l'Etat Civil".

A big Hello to Linden and Yolanda (from Wask.) We love and miss you both, Yolanda, we miss it when you used to come running in after school. Come for a visit, tell your parents to bring you both to Wem. Love always, Granny Minnie & Grandpa Reggie.

Yolanda Namagoose (Wask.) we miss you, hope you come to Wemindji to play with us again, even though we fight a lot! Your friend Cheryl & Julia.

Hello to our bro Thomas and Melissa in Wask. Hey Thomas, we saw you when you got an interview with Maamuuitau, we could tell that you were nervous. See you guys soon (very soon I hope). From your sisters, HM, AM, BM, bros, RM, KM (Wem.) dear: "my love", I wanted 2 tell u how much I love u. I apologize that I can't say it to u in person. I am just scared that I might not

have the right words because everytime I try 2 tell u something, something else comes out, so I'll just do it the easy way. I know I will always love u and I can't wait 4 us 2 begin a our life together. I hope & pray that everything works out. I promise u that I'll be a better person because I now understand why I've been the way I was, from the bottom of

my heart! I am sorry, my love. Don't ever forget how much I love u because believe it or not, I will make sure u will hear me say "I love u" everyday starting the day I see u standing in the church in front of family & friends. I hope you'll see what I've written here. with lotsa love, your b***h.



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